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The President's Daily Brief

25 November 1972

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Top Secret

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Finland's recognition of East Germany yesterday--the first by a West European country--will soon be followed by several others. *(Page 1)*

The Soviet Navy appears to have acquired expanded port privileges in Somalia that permit the use of Soviet support and repair ships. *(Page 2)*

Israel's latest commando strike inside Lebanon was directed against fedayeen elements that have repudiated the recent Fatah-Lebanese agreement halting cross-border operations. *(Page 3)*

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The new Philippine constitution, which will permit President Marcos to remain in power indefinitely, will be submitted to a referendum vote on 15 January. *(Page 3)*

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WESTERN EUROPE - EAST GERMANY

Finland, which yesterday became the first West European state to recognize East Germany, will soon be followed by several others. Helsinki's unilateral recognition of both German states followed a meeting of the Scandinavian countries earlier this week at which all five indicated their readiness to recognize East Germany soon. Despite its membership in NATO, Denmark is the most anxious to move ahead.

> *Iceland, another NATO member that feels itself under pressure from leftist domestic elements, may wait until the NATO foreign ministers' meeting on 7 and 8 December, but not much longer. Sweden, as a non-NATO country, is under little constraint to delay. Only Norway, which presumably wants to avoid annoying Bonn at a time when it is seeking to negotiate a free trade agreement with the EC, is likely to put off recognition until other countries have blazed the way.*

At a recent EC foreign ministers' meeting, Italy, the Benelux countries, and France all claimed that their governments were under heavy pressure to recognize Pankow soon. While they indicated that they would not act before the NATO ministerial meeting, as desired by Bonn, most regarded recognition as likely before the end of the year. A French Foreign Ministry official speculated on 22 November that his government might act immediately after Chancellor Brandt signs the inter-German treaty in the third week of December.

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USSR-SOMALIA

A Soviet F-class submarine was seen in recent satellite photography alongside a Soviet repair ship in the Somali port of Berbera. Photography of last summer showed a J-class submarine next to the repair ship at the Berbera dock. The position of the ships indicates that the submarines, both of them diesel-powered, were undergoing maintenance or replenishment.

An agreement to permit Soviet-controlled ship support operations at Berbera may have been concluded during the visit of Soviet Defense Minister Grechko in early 1972. The Soviets, who have considerable influence in Mogadiscio, have long had access to Somali ports, but use of Soviet repair ships is a new development. Soviet support ships, including a repair ship, have been in the Gulf of Aden continuously since 1968, but earlier support operations took place at anchorages in international waters.

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NOTES

Israel-Lebanon: The Israeli commando strike inside Lebanon Thursday night was directed against members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - General Command, a group that repudiated Fatah leader Arafat's recent agreement with the Lebanese to cease cross-border operations. The firefight left one fedayeen dead and four fedayeen and one Israeli wounded. The border had been quiet since the Lebanese Army imposed controls on fedayeen activity after the last Israeli ground incursion in September. The raid seems to be a clear warning to Beirut that it must impose further measures to prevent the resumption of fedayeen activity near the border.

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[redacted] Brezhnev has made several public appearances in recent days and at last word is still scheduled to visit Hungary next week. 25X1

Philippines: The constitutional convention is putting the final touches on the new constitution. The draft will be submitted to public referendum on 15 January, and overwhelming approval by the Filipino voters is expected. Marcos will portray this as a vote of confidence in his rule under martial law. The document empowers Marcos to head an interim government in which he will exercise the presidential powers of the current constitution as well as those of a strong prime minister under the new constitution. Marcos himself will determine when to implement the parliamentary system, which means he may retain authority indefinitely.

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Bolivia: Mishandling of labor unrest, which led to a series of strikes and the declaration of a state of siege on 23 November, has further shaken the Banzer government. The strikes occurred when the Interior Minister, Colonel Adett, ordered the arrest of some 30 labor leaders even though the unions had just reached a tentative settlement with the Labor Minister. The unions had been threatening to strike over demands for wage increases to offset losses suffered in the recent devaluation of Bolivia's currency. [redacted] 25X1

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